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UNCLAS KUWAIT 000800

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#) [KU](#) TERRORISM  
SUBJECT: COURT ACQUITS THREE DEFENDANTS IN PENINSULA LIONS  
CASE

REF: 06 KUWAIT 1594

(SBU) On May 12, the Court of First Instance acquitted three defendants convicted of terrorism-related charges in the Peninsula Lions case (reftel). Ahmed Abdullah Mohammed Al-Otaibi (Kuwaiti) was originally sentenced to seven years and four months hard labor; Abdul Latif Abdullah Abdul Hadi Al-Juwaisri (Kuwaiti) to four years and four months hard labor; and Mohammed Abdul Razzak Sheikh Essa (Somali) to four years and four months hard labor followed by deportation. Al-Juwaisri was the only defendant present in court; the other two are still fugitives and were acquitted in absentia.

According to press reports, Al-Juwaisri's attorney claimed his client was tortured by Kuwait State Security personnel after being handed over to Kuwaiti authorities by Syria, where he was imprisoned for seven months and also subject to torture. Judge Abdullah Al-Sane cited lack of "convincing evidence" and "testimonial ambiguity" as the justification for the ruling. The Public Prosecution is planning to appeal the verdicts.

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LeBaron